

forts have produced a document of hope and progress, both for Marylanders and our fellow Americans in other states.

Permit me to express my appreciation for the honor of participating with you in the discharge of this historic trust.

*(The delegates rose and applauded.)*

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Dale Adkins, Jr.

DELEGATE ADKINS: Mr. President, members of this distinguished assembly, as we meet in the closing moments of this great Convention, we would be less than human if we did not feel to some degree the weight of history pressing upon us.

As our predecessors a hundred years ago, so here we for many months joined in intense, intelligent, and articulate debate, the end product of which we now proudly present to the people of Maryland.

Hopefully, Mr. President, we have written for the ages—with certainty we are at least convinced that we have written wisely for the moment.

The charter we present to the people of Maryland bears the imprint of no single group—neither conservative nor liberal, Republican nor Democrat, neither white nor black. It represents the finest reconciliation of strongly held views that this Convention could produce. The near unanimous vote which it has received testifies to the patience, the good will, and the selflessness with which this Convention under your inspired leadership, Mr. President, has conducted its business.

However satisfied we are, the final test is yet to come. Have we discharged our obligation in a manner pleasing to the voters of Maryland?

There will be opposition. Some will oppose for selfish reasons, some for reasons of misunderstanding, some because of basic disagreements of philosophy.

Hard though our work has been, our real task is now before us for we are peculiarly equipped to explain this document to the people of Maryland and that we must do.

The facts and logic which supported this document in these halls when presented properly to the people will prove as compelling to the voters of Maryland as those facts of logic have proven to us.

Let us therefore now, as the final act of dedication of this Convention, say to our-

selves that each of us in turn must turn our full attention to the ratification of this great document lest our labors be in vain. To do less, I suggest, would violate our duty to ourselves and to the great people of the State of Maryland. Having done that, we can do no more.

*(The delegates rose and applauded.)*

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Delegate C. William Gilchrist.

DELEGATE GILCHRIST: Mr. President, fellow delegates, and ladies and gentlemen:

Four months ago we came into this chamber from a variety of stations of life, with varying philosophies, but with a unanimous thought in mind—that all of us would do that which was within our power to write the best Constitution we could devise for Maryland.

Today we are signing a document—a good document. It is not an ideal constitution, for one simple reason: There is no such thing as an ideal constitution, for constitutions are written by human beings, with human frailties. They are written by groups, so they must necessarily be group thinking, and cannot represent all the ideas of a single man. Each of us can find in this constitution something which he would wish were not there.

Far more important, each of us finds in this document much that we believe to be very good, much that will be of great benefit for our State and its people. On that good we must stake our hopes.

There have been sharp differences on this floor, yet we have been able to resolve those differences and find in this document that which is acceptable to us, that which we can recommend wholeheartedly to the people of Maryland.

As delegates we have learned to know Maryland's problems. We have had months of intensive study. As we have been given this knowledge, so also have we been given a duty to spread that knowledge and the faith we have developed in this Constitution.

We have one more thing to do to justify the honor which has been done us. We must convince the people of Maryland that we have done our best and that we have done it for all of them. We have many miles to go before we rest.

Thank you.

*(Applause.)*